

Trail Advisory Board Biannual Meeting Tuesday October 18, 2005

Tour at 4 pm. Participants included: Donna Christensen, Myron Groat, Mike Tinkham, Ron Jacobson, and Greg Van Fosson. The tour went over a section of the rock trail project at the west park entrance, continued through the preserve trail to inspect the work done at the 2nd creek crossing (Brushy Creek) south of the dam, then continued into the South Campground to view one of the trail heads which had been moved to help prevent erosion.

Meeting at 6pm.

Chairperson Ruth Nelleson called the meeting to order at 6pm. Present were Linda Jenny, Ruth Nelleson, Mike Tinkham, Myron Groat, Kristi Schaaf, Greg Van Fosson, Chad Kelchen, Amber O'Neill, Steve Bell, Melanie and Steve Barker (Lyme Disease Assoc.) and 6 members from Dodger Cyclists.

The first order of business was the approval of the minutes from the April meeting. Linda moved to accept and Kristi seconded. The minutes were approved as written. Due to time and daylight constraints, the agenda was rearranged. Melanie Barker started off the meeting with a 15 minute informational program on Lyme disease. For more information on this, please contact Steve or Melanie at smbarker4@mchsi.com

Next Chad asked to move the meeting to the trail at the west entrance of the park. There the group was able to see different types of rock from 1" road stone to 3/8 minus as well as different construction techniques. At this point approximately 1¼ mile has been covered with 1" road stone. In the future the rest of this will be covered with a 2" deep layer of 3/8 minus to complete a 2 mile section of trail to meet American with Disabilities Act minimum standards. Chad hopes to be able to complete the east side of this loop with 3/4" size rock. The object of trying the smaller stone is to keep horse riders from riding along side the trail and get them on it, as well as save money. Concerns were discussed about the impact of the stone for horses and bike riders alike.

Back at the office, under old business, Chad revisited the overflow camping and other questions from the last meeting. He explained that the addition of a second shower building would not have a dramatic impact on the sewer system. The new facility to be developed at a later date would only serve the same capacity crowd as is currently in the campground. Problems occurred when we overtaxed that capacity by placing additional campers in the overflow areas. The question was asked about how full the campgrounds were on peak weekends. Chad reported that there were still spots available on all weekends, even Labor Day weekend had about 15 sites left so overflow camping was not an issue this year.

The second thing Chad mentioned was the development schedule. At the last meeting, board members asked where the park was in terms of scheduled development of cabins, beach, and other structures. Chad wanted to point out that the development of future facilities was dependant on funding.

Mike asked Greg what he had learned about the cabins in his trip to Wisconsin. Greg responded that a group visited one of the top forestry products research areas in the country, and the group was able to return with many suggestions. The cabin which was partially started will be disassembled and a new type put up. Other companies are being sought to help complete the cabin project. Cabins are expected within a year.

Mike asked about the status of the reservation system, as well as some specific questions about how reservations will be handled. Chad explained that the best information can be found at www.exploreiowaparks.com. Discussion then shifted toward board appointments. Donna mentioned that the appointments were intended to be a legislative function and should stay that way. The board did vote on the subject at the spring meeting, and decided to allow Parks Bureau Chief Kevin Szcodronski to work on moving the appointments from a legislative responsibility to a Natural Resource Commission appointed board.

Ruth asked how the adopt a trail is working. Chad responded that the Dodger Cyclist section has not seen as much activity in maintenance due to pending reconstruction. The bike club has been active in picking up trash on the section of trail. Future dates will be set to continue work on the trail to prepare it for rock. Ruth and Linda asked the group to set a work date for the fall. After discussion Saturday, October 22, 2005 at 10 am was chosen.

Chad also passed around a poster that he would like to post in the kiosks and bathrooms to help control litter. The board had no objections to the poster.

Myron Groat asked if camping numbers were up for the year. Chad responded that the camping numbers were down a little from last year. Late July and early August saw a dramatic decrease in numbers; he assumed it was due to the heat and gas prices.

Next meeting is set for April 18, 2006 with a tour at 4pm (to see the lake trail) and meeting at 6pm.